

AUTOMATIC COLLECTION AND UPDATING OF  
APPLICATION USAGE

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

5           A method and system providing automatic collection and updating of  
application usage on a large number of electronic devices without user  
intervention. The electronic devices may be a palm-sized computer systems,  
personal digital assistants (PDAs), or wireless telephones. On an electronic  
device, application usage statistics are gathered and stored. Usage statistics  
10 include: number of times an application is started (alternatively, successfully  
completed); amount of time an application is used (taking into account factors  
such as alarms, cradle time, and auto-shutdown); and number of operations  
completed by the user for an application (e.g., number of clicks, number of  
records accessed, number of email received, number of times a particular  
15 feature is used, etc.). The gathered statistics are transferred to a host computer,  
and subsequently to a server (alternatively, the electronic device can send the  
gathered statistics directly to a server). The server tabulates usage statistics  
from a plurality of electronic devices and published the results. The users of the  
electronic devices that gather usage statistics can be compensated in a variety  
20 of ways (e.g., monetary, chances in a raffle, discounts on purchases).